

SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLANT HEALTH STRATEGY FOR AFRICA

Locations	Africa
Dates	01/10/2021 - 30/09/2023

Summary

Robust plant health systems and reduced pest and disease risks contribute to better livelihoods, food security, increased trade, and the protection of biodiversity in Africa. However, challenges faced by the Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of the African Union (AU-IAPSC) prevent them from fulfilling these. Challenges include the absence of clear national and regional coordination frameworks of National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) which are underfunded and unequipped to implement international standards, and insufficient scientific and research capacity to address and apply sanitary and phytosanitary measures. In this project, CABI is providing technical expertise to help the AU-IAPSC implement the Plant Health Strategy for Africa as part of an effort to improve regional coordination, strengthen the capacity of NPPOs and ensure SPS security.

The problem

The AU-IAPSC is Africa's Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO), serving African countries. The AU-IAPSC is responsible for coordinating phytosanitary advocacy and capacity building activities at the continental level and plays a major role in harmonizing regulatory and management strategies for emerging plant health and plant pest challenges in Africa.

However, at the 2020 AU Continental SPS Policy Framework meeting, a number of challenges were presented by the AU-IAPSC which prevent them from protecting Member States from the invasion and spread of pests and diseases and increasing intra- and intercontinental trade.

The main challenges include an absence of clear national and regional coordination frameworks of NPPOs which are underfunded and unequipped to implement international standards. Furthermore, insufficient scientific and research capacity of NPPOs to address and implement SPS measures amplifies the difficulties faced.

To address these problems, improve regional coordination and strengthen the capacity of NPPOs, the African Union Plant Health Strategy is being developed. It will also ensure phytosanitary security under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement.

What we are doing

In this project, CABI will provide technical expertise to assist the AU-IAPSC in implementing their Plant Health Strategy which will be presented to the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) who will review and approve the strategy. Once approved, an implementation plan will be designed and will guide the adoption of the Plant Health Strategy.

CABI's technical and organizational support to the AU-IAPSC and the African Union Department of Agriculture Rural Development Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (AU-DARBE) will then help to implement the African Union Plant Health Strategy and its associated activities.

Some of CABI's key deliverables include:

1. Identify implementation requirements for the African Union Plant Health Strategy and initiate the development of an implementation plan
2. Design a monitoring and evaluation plan and tools for the strategy
3. Identify mechanisms and implement activities to strengthen Africa's position in the International Plant Protection Convention and international forums
4. Identify good practices from other RPPOs and support AU-IAPSC to adopt these and cascade some of their elements to NPPOs
5. Develop a communications plan for sensitization at the level of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and AU Member States to catalyze better awareness and understanding of the plant health component of the AU SPS Policy Framework
6. Support AU-IAPSC to expand Member States' understanding of existing phytosanitary best practices such as risk-based official controls in operations (inspections and certification), derived from Pest Risk Analysis (PRA), surveillance and other measures for market access
7. Finalize the AU-IAPSC pesticide and biopesticide regulatory guidelines and develop and validate protocols for field testing and registration
8. Assist AU-DARBE and AU-IAPSC in preparing for consultation meetings for RECs and AU Member States on plant health throughout the life of the project and supporting Member States on the adoption of Electronic Phytosanitary Certificates (e-Phyto)

Results so far

So far, a study on pesticide and biopesticide regulatory guidelines and the development and validation of protocols for field testing and registration in AU Member States has been carried out. Phytosanitary capacity building for AU Member States and an assessment of the adoption of ePhyto in AU Member States are underway.

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Partners	The Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of the African Union (AU-IAPSC)
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